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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**TWO DISCOVERED IN DECATUR COUNTY
INDICTED FOR COCAINE CONSPIRACY**

PRESS RELEASE

Susan W. Brooks, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana, announced that CARLOS MENDOZA, 32, and ELIEL MACHADO, 20, being housed in the Decatur County Jail, were indicted on Wednesday by a federal grand jury sitting in Indianapolis for cocaine conspiracy and possession with intent to distribute cocaine. MENDOZA is also charged with being an alien, after having been arrested and deported from the United States for an aggravated felony. The indictment follows an investigation by the Indiana State Police, the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

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MENDOZA and MACHADO were arrested on March 6, 2003 by law enforcement officers who were investigating an accident on Interstate 74 in Decatur County. During the investigation of the accident, law enforcement officers discovered MENDOZA and MACHADO extricating cocaine from the wrecked vehicle. In addition, cocaine was also discovered inside of the vehicle.

According to Assistant United States Attorney Josh J. Minkler, who is prosecuting the case for the government, for each count of conspiracy and possession with intent to distribute, MENDOZA faces a maximum possible prison sentence of life imprisonment and a maximum possible fine of \$8,000,000. For reentry into the United States, MENDOZA also faces a maximum possible prison term of 20 years and a maximum possible fine of \$500,000.00 as well as deportation.

MACHADO faces a maximum possible prison sentence of life imprisonment and a maximum possible fine of \$8,000,000 each for conspiracy and possession with intent to distribute cocaine.

The indictment is an allegation only, and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty at trial or by guilty plea.

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